

**REGULAR MEETING
December 17, 2012**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, December 17, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Drake, Hurley, Kotkin, Manousos, McAlister, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console, and Chairperson Hemmann.

Also present: Mike Turner, Town Engineer, Chief Cetran, Lieutenant Crabtree, Anthony Dignoti, Fire Marshall, Richard Bailey, Fire Chief, Mark Guerrera, Assistant Fire Chief, Deputy Chief Schroll, Susan Weintraub, East Hampton, Attorney Slater, Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant Town Manager and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Assistant Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Susan Weintraub, East Hampton Council Chairperson thanked the Wethersfield Volunteer Fire Department for responding in the late hours of May 27th to the devastating fire that burned the 180 year-old Bevin Bell Factory to the ground. She stated that she will never forget the generous support that East Hampton received from Fire Department's around the State. She then presented a Proclamation to the Wethersfield Volunteer Fire Department from East Hampton.

Mr. Bridges reported that at the last meeting, we discussed how the Connecticut Department of Transportation had approved the traffic signal on Maple Avenue at the request of Rocky Hill and asked Mike Turner, Town Engineer to address some remaining questions.

Mike Turner explained that the project is part of a larger project to actually install and upgrade traffic signals throughout DOT District 1 and there are actually 20 different locations involved. He explained that the intersection that we are talking about is Maple Street with Griswold, Two Stone and Waters Avenue in Rocky Hill. Those four roads actually intersect with about a 200-ft offset distance between Griswold and Waters Ave. The DOT has proposed to install two signal heads at each of those locations and interconnect them. He stated that there will be a left turn lane if you are going Northbound on Rte. 3 into Wethersfield, a left turn lane into Griswold Rd. He stated that the project was bid by DOT and awarded to Electrical Contractors in East Hartford. Mr. Turner explained that it is a \$1.9 million dollar project and that physical construction will start in May 2013 and they have 264 days to complete it. A discussion then ensued regarding the placement of the traffic signals.

Mayor Hemmann asked Police Chief Cetran and Officer Crabtree to talk about the Wolcott Hill Rd. situation.

Police Chief Cetran explained that the first accident that was right across from Bliss Market has been determined through the investigation by the Mid-State Accident Reconstruction crew that it

was pedestrian error that caused the accident. He explained that the driver of the vehicle was actually traveling much slower than the speed limit, so it really wasn't an accident that was caused by the lack of signals or another stop sign. He reported that the second accident happened a couple of weeks later; it was actually up the street. It is still under investigation; however, it appears as being the same way. It was just one of those things where things happen, it was an accident at low speeds and fortunately the person in that accident wasn't injured. Chief Cetran explained that there are certain guidelines they follow which are federal guidelines, but at this point and time the recommendation that we have, unless you actually stop the parking at Bliss Market, there is really nothing else you can do. That, no parking at Bliss Market, was the recommendation back in 1978. The Council thanked Chief Cetran for coming in and explaining the outcome of the investigation.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO ADD TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR REAL ESTATE NEGOTIATIONS AS 2F"**, seconded by Councilor McAlister.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Mayor Hemmann requested a moment in silence in respect for what happened in Newtown, CT on Friday and stated that the Town will be having a candlelight vigil on December 23, at 6:00 p.m. at Cove Park. She stated that there was a consortium of Mayor's and First Selection who asked that communities come together as communities to support Newtown. Mayor Hemmann stated that on December 23rd, there will be 10 communities at this point who will be coming together.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Ave. commented on the lack of a stop sign on Morrison Avenue and described the traffic flow in that area.

Harry Lichtenbaum, 16 Town House Lane commented that in past years before Christmas, Richard Lasher would come down and bring Christmas wishes to the Council. He stated that this year, things are different because of the Newtown events. Mr. Lichtenbaum brought 9 candy canes to represent the brave teachers and first responders and another 20 to represent and remember those blessed young small people who are not with us anymore whose spirits are in heaven now. He then passed out the candy canes to the Town Council and the public.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd, commented on the stop lights on Maple St. and Water St. He suggested adding a "slow down" sign by Bliss Market. He also commented on the State budget crises and state spending.

Joel Wagner, 203 Clearfield Rd., wished the Council a Merry Christmas; thanked them for allowing him to speak at the meetings over the last few weeks. He wished the Council wisdom

regarding the Wilkus Farm proposal decision and stated that he favors saving the barn and the farm. He believes a stop sign is needed by Bliss Market, but not lights by Griswold Rd.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Drake reported the High School Project Building Committee met last Monday and reviewed the final exterior plan. It looks nice and hopefully they will come in and do another presentation soon. He stated the Architect did a great job. The building committee is working on the final budgets for the project this week and reported that everything seems to be going in the right direction.

Councilor Kotkin reported that the Insurance Committee will be meeting on Thursday. The numbers in the health care account so far this year is almost \$1 million dollars below expectations. Those are good numbers as the Council considers funding the health care fund over the next year or so. He added that town employees are staying healthy.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor McAlister requested an update at some point regarding the timing and funding of replacement turf within the high school construction project.

Councilor Drake commented that he is against the traffic light on Maple and Griswold Rd. and feels that it is a waste of money; he asked if we have any say in the matter being that it is a State road.

Mr. Bridges explained that the light at Griswold is a reflection of the light at Water because they are so close together, they really needed both of those. Mr. Bridges explained that Rocky Hill asked us about it and given the situation of Waters and the signalizations, we found that the signalization was acceptable because that made it work and we needed both to make it work.

Deputy Mayor Console reported that he was invited along with others to the Wethersfield Volunteer Fire Department's Award night. He commented that it was another good event and thanked them all for their years of volunteer service.

Deputy Mayor Console reported that the Economic Development Commission had their holiday social and added that it was another nice event and mentioned that Longevity Awards were given to Village Pizza as well as some other businesses in Town.

Deputy Mayor Console thanked Mr. Lichtenbaum for the candy cane and mentioned that he has a candle lit in his house for over 10 years for all the troops over in the Middle East and he is going to put the candy cane next to it to remember all those children in Newtown in his daily prayers.

Deputy Mayor Console reported that he received a couple of calls regarding trucks with fill going back and forth at Keisha Farms. He believes that some of the fill that is being dropped off there has nothing to do with Wethersfield whatsoever. He stated that he will call Mr. Bridges in a day or so to discuss.

Mayor Hemmann reported that she has received cards from Barak Obama, the Biden Family and Dutchpoint Credit Union and will give them to the Town Manager to post in the office.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Bridges reported that they are working on the budget for the high school and because there are some environmental and site issues, there is some flux going on in the budget, so over the next week or two, they will figure that out and come back with the revised budget. He stated that they had some escalating costs but it should get worked out within the next couple of days. Mr. Bridges stated that they had a meeting this evening to go over those costs but there is an alternates list they're considering so the next round of budgets you should see some differences between the last time with keeping the program intact.

Mr. Bridges reported that Mike Turner, Peter Gillespie and Attorney Mark Brance have attended all the Toll Brothers Project meetings that have gone on. He reported that the intervener status that we've sought has given us access to every document and direct contact with the applicant and their experts as well as the town's experts in Newington and, so far, every mitigation that we have asked for we have been provided including if those ponds aren't maintained properly, the Town of Wethersfield can effectuate the repairs or maintenance and levy the houses in Newington for the cost and he stated that that has been an accepted mitigation by the developer through the Homeowners Association covenant. Mr. Bridges stated that they are still in draft form but we actually were allowed to write that for the developer. He reported that they have accepted our blasting requirements, have relocated the utilities the way we have asked them to and are working on the buffer strip on Russell Rd., and commented that our intervener status has gained us quite a bit in that process. He reported that there are more meetings in January and the public hearing will close. Mr. Bridges explained that this is an application before the Wetlands Commission so the P&Z has already approved it with conditions and stated that right now the Wetlands Commission is evaluating what impacts, if any, since the project has been located quite a bit away from the wetlands, in order to get a permit they need to get the wetlands approval so the public hearing process will close in January and then there will be a time period for when they have to make a decision.

Mr. Bridges next reported that he had an email from Bill Knapp to read into the record.

Dolores Sassano read a Petition which was signed by 66 people regarding the Wilkus Farm property.

COUNCIL ACTION

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Hemmann changed the order of business taking 3a out of order so the Fire Chief Bailey and Assistant Fire Chief Guerra and Deputy Chief Schroll and Fire Marshal Dignoti can leave.

Councilor Hurley moved **“TO APPROVE THE MUTUAL AID RESPONSE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE WETHERSFIELD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE GLASTONBURY FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR THE PUTNAM BRIDGE AREA”**, seconded by Councilor Manousos.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if that included the HESS Oil Company and all that too.

Chief Bailey responded no, that this just the Route 3 right to Elm Street.

Councilor Drake asked if we would get a call to their Home Depot.

Chief Bailey clarified that it will be us, Northbound to Glastonbury, Main Street. They will cover Southbound to our Elm Street. He stated that this is something that has been done for the 25 years that he has been in; it just has never been written.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE WILKUS FARM PROPOSAL”**, seconded by Councilor Manousos.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 9:05, the Council exited the Executive Session and the regular session resumed.

Councilor Hurley moved **“TO ACCEPT THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE WETHERSFIELD FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AFT-CT / AFL-CIO AND THE WETHERSFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION, JULY 1, 2013 – JUNE 30, 2016 SUBJECT TO SIGNATURE BY ALL PARTIES,”** seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

Deputy Mayor Console commented that due to the amount of documentation that is included in the package, he has not had appropriate time to review the material and stated that he has some issues and at this point may have to abstain from voting because he would rather be clear on everything that he is reading before he votes on something.

Mayor Hemmann asked a question about the approval process about this contract. She asked if

we do not act upon it we would have to wait for the signature so it would be 30 days from the signature that action is required so if we don't act on it within 30 days of the signature it becomes automatically enforced. Is that correct?

Mr. Bridges replied that he believes so.

Mayor Hemmann explained that when you have the signed contract you can choose to act upon the signed contract or you can choose to be silent on that contract. Mayor Hemmann explained that if you are silent and don't act upon it within that 30-day period, it becomes enforced on the 31st day.

Mr. Bridge asked if it was signed yet and it was verified that it was signed.

Mayor Hemmann then explained that because it is on the agenda tonight, we have 30 days to act upon it within the 30 days from tonight, that's good, but if we choose not to act upon it, then on the 31st day it will be enforced as it's been signed.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if we table this because he has not read it thoroughly to really understand it, we can act on it at the next meeting.

Mayor Hemmann responded if it's within the 30 days.

Mr. Bridges added that we can ask the Board of Education Finance and Human Resources person to be here to describe it.

The Councilors offered their support in tabling it.

Councilor Kotkin commented that he is fine with tabling it and in reading through the contract, he thought that there were some real good steps from the town's standpoint both short-term and long-term, but is fine with tabling it, but doesn't want this contract to get away.

Deputy Mayor Console moved to **"TO TABLE UNTIL THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING TO ALLOW TIME FOR A THOROUGH READ-THROUGH AND TO HAVE THE OFFICIALS AVAILABLE FOR NEXT TIME"**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Councilor Roberts asked if we knew when it was signed by the Board of Ed.

Mr. Bridges asked Town Clerk Sassano if we received it yet. Ms. Sassano replied, no.

Mr. Bridges then read the statute to the Council and it was determined that it needs to be 30 days in receipt of the contract.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT TO THE ENERGY-EFFICIENT LIGHTING PROGRAM AGREEMENT FOR THE PITKIN COMMUNITY CENTER TO ADD ADDITIONAL REPLACEMENT LIGHTING ”**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-1. Councilor Kotkin abstained.

Councilor Hurley moved **“TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SUBMIT AND ACCEPT, IF AWARDED, A GRANT FROM THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR A DIESEL REDUCTION PROJECT FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF A DUMP TRUCK”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

Mayor Hemmann asked if there was any news about whether this would be affected because of budget.

Mr. Bridges replied that they were still working out the details.

Deputy Mayor Console asked how we were looking as far as the vehicles go down at the garage. Are they in pretty decent shape?

Mr. Bridges replied that buying a new dump truck on a consistent basis each year is probably what is necessary to maintain the viability of the fleet.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT POLICE VIDEO EQUIPMENT TECHNOLOGY GRANT FUNDS FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT”**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Councilor Roberts asked about the handcuff purchase.

Ms. Palmer explained that the Chief would like to have each officer carry two pairs of handcuffs rather than one so they are purchasing another 50 handcuffs so that if an officer had to arrest two suspects by himself, he had two pairs of handcuffs on his person.

Councilor Roberts recalled a discussion at budget time last year about upgrading the equipment for fingerprinting.

Ms. Palmer responded that that was a fuming machine for evidence collection and was a different

fund source.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

BIDS

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO AWARD THE STREET SWEEPING & CATCH BASIN/SEWER CLEANING SERVICES BID #2012-16 TO WETHERSFIELD SWEEPING, FOR THE TERM JANUARY 1, 2013 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2014 WITH TWO RENEWALS, CONTINGENT UPON BUDGET APPROPRIATION”**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Councilor Kotkin asked how the pricing compares with the expiring contract.

RaeAnn replied that it is very close and stated that she doesn't have the exact numbers in her head but that she can get them for him and stated that it might be a couple of thousand dollars more this year and offered to get those numbers to him.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the renewal options were the same price.

RaeAnn responded yes, they are the same price.

Deputy Mayor Console commented that the process has dropped quite a bit because we use less sand on the road now and stated that it is actually less than what we were paying some years back.

RaeAnn responded yes, it is significantly less.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Manousos moved **“MOTION TO ACCEPT THE BID FROM ASSOCIATED ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS FOR \$83,811.00 FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE HANMER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FIRE ALARM SYSTEM”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

Deputy Mayor Console asked why has this taken three years to get done?

Mr. Bushey replied that it was passed by Capital Improvements Advisory Committee in 2010. He was out on medical leave.

Deputy Mayor Console replied that the Board of Education should have stepped up to the plate and it shouldn't have taken three years.

Councilor Kotkin commented about the big gap between Associated Electronic Systems and the next lowest bidder and asked what we know about Associated.

Mr. Bushey stated that he did some due diligence in checking their references. He stated that he checked with the Town of Farmington and Granby and Central State College. He stated that they gave them high regard on their work ethic and how long it took them to actually get their individual project's done.

Councilor Kotkin asked when is the work scheduled to start and end?

Mr. Bushey replied the work is schedule to start right around the first of the year. He stated that the person in charge is looking to mobilize during the Christmas vacation week at Hanmer to get a feel for the building and right after that to get started. He stated that they are expecting substantial completion by the end of March and full completion by April 15th.

Councilor Kotkin asked if there is anything particular that you need to do since you will be working on it while the school is in session.

Mr. Bushey replied that the old system will remain redundant to the new until the new one is cut over and tested by our local fire marshal.

Councilor Kotkin asked if it will interfere at all with the functioning with the school.

Mr. Bushey replied no, not at all and stated that there is going to be shift work and everything is going to happen after school it out. He stated that there might be some minor programming of the system done during school, but otherwise, there will be no interaction with the children whatsoever.

Councilor Drake just wanted to reassure the Counsel that the Building Committee asked the same questions and they vetted it pretty well and they are on top of the whole thing.

Deputy Mayor Console asked that the system that is in place now will be 100% functional?

Councilor Drake responded that yes, it will stay functioning until the full switchover.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Drake moved **"TO TABLE THE WILKUS FARM PROPOSALS"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

Councilor McAlister commented that since there are so many questions still remaining about this, asked why we do not entertain just rejecting it and going back out to bid. He asked what cost

would be involved in that rather than prolonging this. As well as giving everyone a fair shot at rebidding this.

Mayor Hemmann commented that that is certainly an option that is available.

Councilor Kotkin commented that he is not sure that there is anything wrong with any of the bids right now and stated that the right answer is that there are a lot of irons in the fire and if we could make everybody happy, we can't lose an opportunity to do that.

Mayor Hemmann added that there were a significant number of questions that still need to be clarified in order for us to get to the point of making the right decision.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted to TABLE. The motion passed 8-1-0. Councilor McAlister voted no.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

Mayor Hemmann introduced a resolution concerning adoption of the Harbor Management Plan as proposed by the Harbor Management Commission.

Mayor Hemmann introduced an ordinance amending the Code of the Town of Wethersfield, inserting section 14-22 providing for the creation of a Trust in the Capital of Nonrecurring Expense Fund.

MINUTES

Councilor Manousos moved **"TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2012"**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-1. Councilor Kotkin abstained.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 3, 2012"**, seconded by Councilor Manousos.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Barbara Ruhe, 79 Main St., thanked the Council for all their hard work this past year.

Joel Wagner, 203 Clearfield Rd., commented that he is saddened to see the Council tabling the decision and hopes that they get all the information that they need to make a decision soon and wished the Council good luck with it.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:35 p.m., Councilor Manousos moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by Vote of Council
January 7, 2013